Abstract

This paper will present a national funded research project, with the short name "Drama, creativity and aesthetic learning processes". This project builds upon previous Norwegian research on drama as an aesthetic learning form (Sæbø, 2003a, 2003b, 2005a, 2005b, 2009). In the project presented here we examines, among other things, more in depth how drama as an aesthetic learning form can generate students' interest, develop motivation for academic work and thus improve the students' learning process and learning outcome.

The main and overall findings in this project are:

Creative and aesthetic modes of expression and learning form in drama enable students to engage as active participants in their own learning processes. This strengthens and improves the learning environment and learning process for all students, but requires teachers with professional competence in drama, pedagogy and the subject matter content.

The paper will start by presenting the background for the research project; the challenges and problems of the school today. To fulfil the social mandate of the school and the general curriculum emphasis on the development of the creative human being, it is necessary to increase students' creative participation in the learning process through realization of the UNESCO Road map for arts in education (UNESCO, 2006). Then the paper will continue by presenting some of the mini action based projects from the classroom research on drama and reading / reading comprehension, with examples from primary and secondary school. These mini projects are presented and the learning process analyzed in relation to the mother tongue matter content, the drama matter content and the more general educational and methodological matter content, both in terms of the students' and teachers' participation and contribution in the teaching- and learning process.

The findings will be particularly presented and discussed are:

Drama creates involvement and interest, and motivates and encourages students to work hard in the learning process. This is caused by the inclusion of the students' physical and aesthetic activity in interaction with the cognitive activity when fiction and role play are part of the learning process. How this takes place and affects the learning will be elaborated and discussed in this paper.

Further on the research shows that drama creates an inclusive learning environment when drama is integrated in common whole class teaching and it also gives the teacher the opportunity to take individual student concerns. Further on I find that all students can be actively involved in the learning process, if their opportunity to contribute is based on their own competence and qualifications/ assumptions. The
special opportunities and challenges in relation to inclusive whole class teaching will be concretised and discussed in the light of the potential of drama as a learning form. The paper will end by a discussion on teachers need to be professional skilled in drama and pedagogy to succeed in the planning and the facilitation of a process drama that stimulates and creates commitment and learning pressure in the students learning process.

Keywords: Drama in education, aesthetic learning process, action based research

References:

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Drama, creativity and aesthetic learning processes

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